

Release: January 27, 2003  
Contact: Jim Grebing at 573/751-9065 or  
Bill Niblack at 573/751-3595

Missouri Department of  
Economic Development  
P.O. Box 1157  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-1157  
[www.missouridevelopment.org](http://www.missouridevelopment.org)

### **Missouri's Unemployment Rate Held Steady in December**

Missouri labor market conditions were relatively unchanged in December, according to the Missouri Department of Economic Development (DED). The unemployment rate remained at 4.8 percent in December, the same rate it was in November and a year earlier, but non-farm payroll employment continued to decline.

Throughout the state, the lowest unemployment rates were found in Boone and Nodaway Counties, each reporting 1.8 percent. Four counties reported double-digit unemployment rates: Pemiscot at 10.3 percent, Wayne at 12.2 percent, Reynolds at 12.5 percent, and McDonald at 12.8 percent. Overall, Missouri's unemployment rate remained nearly a percentage point below the national rate of 5.7 percent in December.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, unemployment decreased two-tenths of a point to 4.9 percent, the same as it was in December 2001. Most of this year, the rate has oscillated around 5 percent, jumping up to 5.4 percent in June and 5.3 percent in July, before falling back below 5 percent.

Non-farm payroll employment has been decreasing fairly consistently since February 2001, one month before the recession began. The December decrease was 6,500 jobs, on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Much of the decrease can be attributed to retail trade, where employment dropped by 5,300 jobs. Some industries experienced less seasonal hiring than usual. In eating and drinking places, there was a larger-than-usual seasonal decrease. Part of this might be attributable to the closing and opening of school and college food service operations associated with the winter break.

The construction industry continued to lose jobs, with employment falling by 1,300 in December to 131,200. Business services bucked the trend, adding 1,500 jobs, seasonally adjusted. Changes in most other industries were small.

Over the past year, non-farm payrolls have lost 39,900 jobs, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Construction accounted for nearly a third of the drop: 12,300 jobs. Manufacturing employment is down by 7,900, with electrical equipment accounting for 3,800 jobs. Wholesale trade employment has fallen by 6,300 over the year, while retail trade employment has been flat. Transportation and utilities employment is down by 5,900, the majority in communications. Business services has lost 6,000 jobs over the year. In the government sector, state government has lost 3,700 jobs over the year, partly offset by a gain of 1,600 in local government. Health services has been about the only consistent growth industry, gaining 2,900 jobs. Other service industries reported little net change.

-more-

**MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES**  
**FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES**  
**CURRENT MONTH (DECEMBER 2002), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2002), AND YEAR AGO (DECEMBER 2001)**

	DEC 2002	NOV 2002	OCT 2002	DEC 2001		DEC 2002	NOV 2002	OCT 2002	DEC 2001
U.S. (not seasonally adjusted)	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.4	Atchison	2.6	2.6	2.1	2.8
MISSOURI	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.8	Audrain	4.3	4.2	3.6	3.7
ST. LOUIS MSA	5.1	5.2	4.9	4.9	Barton	4.1	3.9	3.3	4.0
Franklin	5.3	4.9	4.5	5.1	Bates	7.1	6.8	6.1	6.3
Jefferson	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.6	Benton	7.3	6.8	5.9	8.8
Lincoln	5.7	5.3	4.7	5.1	Caldwell	6.7	6.2	6.1	7.1
St. Charles	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.5	Carroll	5.2	5.2	4.2	4.5
St. Louis County	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	Cedar	7.0	6.3	4.8	4.6
Warren	5.1	5.2	4.2	5.4	Chariton	6.2	6.3	7.1	5.6
St. Louis City	8.1	8.7	8.3	8.3	Clark	6.7	5.5	4.9	7.5
KANSAS CITY MSA	4.8	5.1	5.1	4.4	Cooper	4.7	4.1	3.5	6.2
Cass	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.5	Crawford	6.7	5.9	5.3	6.6
Clay	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.2	Dade	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.6
Clinton	4.8	4.7	4.2	3.8	Dallas	7.1	6.8	6.1	9.5
Jackson	5.5	5.7	5.7	5.0	Daviess	5.0	4.5	5.0	4.8
Lafayette	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	DeKalb	4.8	4.5	3.6	4.3
Platte	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.2	Dent	7.7	7.5	5.6	8.7
Ray	4.2	4.1	3.7	3.4	Douglas	9.9	10.0	9.7	13.0
SPRINGFIELD MSA	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	Dunklin	7.9	7.2	6.3	8.0
Christian	4.5	4.5	4.4	3.6	Gasconade	5.9	4.8	4.0	5.2
Greene	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.6	Gentry	3.3	3.5	2.9	3.6
Webster	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.2	Grundy	4.6	4.3	3.6	5.1
JOPLIN MSA	5.0	5.1	4.7	4.3	Harrison	5.3	4.6	3.7	3.6
Jasper	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.1	Henry	6.1	5.9	5.0	6.0
Newton	6.0	6.1	5.4	4.7	Hickory	8.6	7.6	6.1	9.4
COLUMBIA MSA	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	Holt	4.5	4.4	3.2	3.7
Boone	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	Howard	4.4	4.3	3.5	4.9
ST. JOSEPH MSA	5.3	5.4	5.0	5.5	Iron	7.4	7.6	8.0	8.2
Andrew	4.8	4.3	4.1	4.8	Johnson	3.6	3.8	3.3	3.3
Buchanan	5.4	5.7	5.2	5.7	Knox	3.1	2.6	2.7	3.1
ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA	2.9	2.4	2.1	3.1	Laclede	5.3	5.3	4.8	6.7
Adair	2.7	2.2	2.0	2.9	Lewis	4.6	3.3	2.8	4.7
Schuyler	4.4	3.2	2.7	4.1	Linn	9.2	9.8	11.0	8.5
BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA	6.1	5.6	5.0	6.4	Livingston	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.1
Butler	5.7	5.4	4.7	6.1	McDonald	12.8	6.4	5.7	6.0
Carter	6.8	5.9	4.2	7.6	Macon	6.2	5.6	5.0	8.2
Ripley	7.2	6.3	6.2	7.0	Madison	8.1	7.7	6.7	9.8
CAMDEN-MILLER LMA	8.1	6.8	4.6	8.5	Mercer	6.4	6.1	3.7	4.3
Camden	7.9	6.8	4.7	8.7	Monroe	6.7	6.4	5.3	6.6
Miller	8.3	6.7	4.5	8.3	Montgomery	5.6	5.0	4.4	6.3
CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA	5.2	5.1	4.6	5.5	Morgan	7.9	7.0	5.6	8.9
Bollinger	5.7	5.3	4.5	9.8	Nodaway	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.4
Cape Girardeau	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.5	Ozark	5.9	5.4	4.8	7.1
Mississippi	7.9	7.7	7.1	9.7	Pemiscot	10.3	10.1	9.2	11.0
New Madrid	9.9	9.5	8.7	7.9	Perry	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.3
Scott	5.2	5.0	4.7	5.8	Pettis	5.1	5.0	4.7	7.6
COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA	3.2	3.1	2.7	3.2	Pike	4.7	4.6	4.4	6.1
Callaway	3.6	3.2	2.8	3.8	Polk	4.0	3.9	3.7	4.2
Cole	2.7	2.7	2.3	2.5	Pulaski	4.6	4.2	3.9	5.8
Moniteau	3.9	3.5	3.6	4.0	Putnam	5.3	3.7	3.2	4.6
Osage	4.5	4.0	3.4	4.2	Randolph	4.5	4.5	4.1	5.5
HOWELL-OREGON-SHANNON LMA	5.2	4.8	4.4	5.4	Reynolds	12.5	10.7	7.8	13.6
Howell	4.9	4.4	4.3	5.0	St. Clair	5.6	4.8	4.9	5.4
Oregon	3.9	3.4	3.5	4.6	Ste. Genevieve	4.8	4.6	4.3	5.3
Shannon	8.3	7.7	5.9	7.8	Saline	4.9	4.8	4.5	6.3
LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA	5.0	4.5	3.9	5.1	Scotland	3.6	3.1	2.9	4.3
Barry	5.6	4.9	3.9	5.2	Shelby	5.3	4.1	3.6	6.1
Lawrence	4.4	4.1	3.9	5.0	Stoddard	6.7	6.0	5.1	7.4
MARION-RALLS LMA	4.8	4.6	4.3	5.3	Stone	8.4	6.9	5.0	8.6
Marion	4.5	4.5	4.3	5.3	Sullivan	6.8	3.4	2.8	3.3
Ralls	5.8	4.8	4.4	5.3	Taney	4.8	3.9	3.1	5.2
PHELPS-MARIES LMA	3.5	3.1	2.9	3.5	Texas	6.8	6.5	5.1	7.7
Maries	4.1	3.3	3.0	4.4	Vernon	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.6
Phelps	3.3	3.0	2.9	3.3	Wayne	12.2	11.0	9.1	12.8
ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA	7.8	7.7	6.9	8.2	Worth	3.1	3.8	3.7	5.2
St. Francois	7.2	7.3	6.6	7.8	Wright	7.7	7.8	6.8	10.7
Washington	9.3	8.7	7.7	9.2					

NOTE: Data for counties within MSAs/LMAs are disaggregated from MSA/LMA totals.

Produced by MO Department of Economic Development, MERIC, in cooperation with U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics